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16 April 1961

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: General Gray's Briefing for DOD Operations

1. Per instructions of Chief, WH/4, I attended a briefing at 0900 hours this date held by General Gray in the JCS Briefing Room. In addition to those members of General Gray's immediate staff who are working on support, the briefing was attended by Secretary of Defense McNamara, Mr. Bundy from Defense, and Generals Lemnitzer, Shoup, LeMay, Eddleman and Admiral Burke. (Some additional Generals whom I could not identify were also present.)

2. General Gray conducted a briefing primarily from the DOD support angle, however, his opening minutes were devoted to the air strike, the Operation and the impending brigade assault. When the results of the air strike were discussed, it was pointed out that only a preliminary analysis of photographs had been accomplished and definitive results would not be available until later the morning of the 16th. Secretary McNamara asked how many B-26's are shown to be still on the airfields in Cuba. The answer to this question was being obtained by Lt. Colonel Tarwater from the PM Staff the morning of the 16th for return to Secretary McNamara. In discussing the losses incurred by Secretary McNamara asked if DOD had any more B-26's to give to the operation. General LeMay said yes, and Secretary McNamara said he wanted all to be delivered as soon as possible. When queried I informed him that we had enough crews to ferry these to (Colonel VanDine is talking to Colonel Beerli, DPD, on this matter.)

3. In discussing the convoy movement it was pointed out that the escort ships had taken off two injured from the ATLANTICO. General Gray requested that these men be taken off the Navy's hands as soon as possible. (I have passed this request to and of PM.)

4. On logistics matters they discussed a ship scheduled to sail tonight. I did not know to what they were referring. (Something from St. Mary's?)

5. Next subject was regarding the priorities and movement of the additional supplies for 5,000-10,000-15,000 increments. Secretary McNamara was insistent that everything should be moved to as close a

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position as possible in order to allow the necessary shipment when called for. I gather that all this material is being positioned at Anniston Depot in Alabama. Discussions continued regarding 48 two and one-half ton trucks and 24 jeeps, 8 M48 tanks and mechanized graders. On these items Secretary McNamara also recommended that they be put in as near a position for utilization as possible.

(U) 6. The question was raised on the use of personnel carriers during which it was pointed out that these items are attributable to the United States and could not be very well explained away if supplied through a covert channel.

(U) 7. It became apparent that it was Secretary McNamara's understanding that a great amount of the equipment to be provided was predicated on the fact that a Provisional Government holding Cuban territory would be supported by the U.S. and supplies furnished overtly. In this case the problem of attributability for the personnel carriers does not exist. All agreed that there are plenty of personnel carriers in the Georgia, Alabama and Texas areas to supply these if needed. In addition, under these conditions, DOD would take over the delivery of the supplies all the way.

(U) 8. Someone raised the point that it would be best if other L.A. nations put in token forces in support of the Provisional Government; General Lemnitzer stated that this action was State's affair and of no concern to DOD.

(U) 9. On the hospital matter it was pointed out that the Services were going ahead with scheduling for the movement of a hospital unit to Vieques. The first priority would be a Marine Unit, 60 beds, which could be moved to meet our deadline of 22 April. A second hospital unit could be provided by our deadline of 6 May possibly through additional elements of a Marine hospital unit or a separate Army organization. No problem envisaged here.

(U) 10. Question then returned to the use of tanks, personnel carriers, and other heavy equipment and Secretary McNamara asked if more Cubans would be available to man this equipment. I told him that recruitment was continuing and that these trainees could be provided with perhaps some already capable of operating some of the equipment types involved. Secretary McNamara suggested that we try to recruit 25 or more trainees who can be trained here to operate tanks, etc.

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General Gray interrupted to note that the President had stated no training would be accomplished in the States; Secretary McNamara said he thought surely the President would agree to this training being accomplished. (Who takes action on this item regarding recruitment of trainees?) In discussing training, Secretary McNamara said, of course, they can't be trained in Guatemala because it has been agreed that everything would be closed out in Guatemala and no further activity take place in that area. (1 line of source text not declassified) 5

11. Discussions turned next to unfinished business. First problem brought up was the request for Avon Park with General Gray noting that the Air Force did not agree that the use of this site was feasible. General LeMay said he could not understand why Eglin, part of which is already being used in support of our activities, could not perform the tasks that we have requested. He noted that Avon Park could be covered if necessary by the Air Force stating they were using it for bombing again, but that he thought Eglin with its already existing facilities would make much more sense for this activity. (This matter will be discussed with DPD by Air Force officers.) 6

12. Other items of unfinished business called for no comment: i.e. hospital arrangements noted above, early warning coverage for Nicaragua by ESSEX, mechanized grader no longer needed.

13. At this point Colonel Tarwater indicated he had received word that the operation had not been run as scheduled. General Lemnitzer pointed out that if the area had been alerted this would have accomplished the same thing as if the landing had been made. ✓

14. When questioned as to the failure of the preceding night on the mission it was pointed out that the vessel involved had difficulty in finding the landing beach. Secretary McNamara suggested that perhaps they needed to provide sterilized Navy personnel for use on our vessels, if this was necessary to insure that the navigational needs of the operations be met. Admiral Burke was in agreement. B

15. Secretary McNamara again returned to the problem of backup support for the force and future military operations on Cuba after the assault. He said he wanted to be sure that everything that would be needed would be provided. Did we have enough stock piled for airdrops?

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He seemed to feel that arms for 4,000 to 5,000 men might not be enough. He suggested that every effort be made to package for air and small boat delivery everything that we estimated would be needed to support our efforts. Admiral Burke noted here that small boat operations were very effective in supplying bulk tonnage.

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Jan (16 Apr 61)

Distribution:

Orig - C/WH/4
1 - DC/WH/4
1 - C/WH/4/OPS
1 - C/WH/4/PM
1 - C/WH/4/Support
1 - C/WH/4/P&P
1 - WH/4/SA/Mil

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